Leaflet for Families

Referrals to Children's Services

HERTFORDSHIRE
safeguarding children
PARTNERSHIP

You have this leaflet because we talked about making a referral to Children's Services.

Why do I need a referral?

Family life can be complicated. Children and families sometimes need a bit of extra support. When that happens, it's okay to ask for help.

There are people who can help you. They are trained to listen to your worries and concerns. They can help you and your family get the right support at the right time. This can stop worries from becoming bigger.

We talked about how things are for you and your family. We think Children's Services may be able to help. To get this help, we need to make a referral to Children's Services. Here's how we'll do it.

How a referral is made

- We'll complete a secure online referral to Children's Services containing the information we discussed.
- Children's Services will look at the information and decide if there are services that could support your family. This process could take up to one week.
- If you have any concerns in the meantime, you can contact the person who made the referral.
- Or you could talk to someone working with your family, for example, a teacher or health visitor.

More about parental responsibility:
www.gov.uk/parental-rights-responsibilities

If you want to refer yourself to Children's Services, you can call **0300 123 4043.**

What will Children's Services do?

Children's Services will be open and honest with you. Someone from Children's Services may phone or email you to understand your views. They'll ask for information about your child and family from different places like health services, police, probation, and your child's nursery or school. This is so they can understand what services you have received before and what needs you have now. They'll then recommend the best help available in Hertfordshire.

Giving permission

It's important that we work together. We need permission from a legal parent or carer (someone with legal parental responsibility) to refer to Children's Services.

This means that you agree to the referral being made and agree that information can be sought about you and your child from other professionals.

Can things happen without your permission?

If your permission is needed for a referral but you decline, usually the referral can't be made, and Children's Services can't provide support.

However, data protection law does allow information to be shared without permission if it is to keep a child safe.

We want to involve families in decision making around referrals to social care, but we recognise that this is not always possible.

Remember, we must act in your child's best interests. If we have made a referral without your permission, we should explain the reasons why.

Data Protection – how we look after you information

Professionals must record any involvement they have with you and the permissions you've given.

They must follow data protection law and only share information with those who have a legal power to see it.

If you want to view records for yourself or your children, you can make a subject access request. You will need to hold legal parental responsibility to apply for a copy of your child's records.

Not all referrals are accepted. If you've been referred and aren't sure what has happened to your referral, a person with parental responsibility can call 0300 123 4043.

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